I value morality. Moral deliberation must reject naturalism because any moral judgment presupposes a choice on the part of the agent.

**CS Lewis 46** writes[[1]](#footnote-1)

**It would be impossible to accept naturalism** itself **if we** really and consistently **believed naturalism. For naturalism is a system of thought. But for naturalism all thoughts are mere events with irrational causes. It is**, to me at any rate, **impossible to regard** the **thoughts** which make up naturalism **in that way and**, at the same time, to **[also] regard them as a real insight into external reality.** Bradley distinguished idea-event from idea-making,15 but naturalism seems to me committed to regarding ideas simply as events. For meaning is a relation of a wholly new kind, as remote, as mysterious, as opaque to empirical study, as soul itself. Perhaps this may be even more simply put in another way. Every particular thought (whether it is a judgment of fact or a judgment of value) is always and by all men discounted the moment they believe that it can be explained, without remainder, as the result of irrational causes. Whenever you know what the other man is saying is wholly due to his complexes or to a bit of bone pressing on his brain, you cease to attach any importance to it. But if naturalism were true, then all thoughts whatever would be wholly the result of irrational causes. **Therefore, all thoughts would be equally worthless. Therefore, naturalism is worthless. If it is true, then we can know no truths.**

Therefore, morality presupposes some conception of free will. It follows from free will that the only binding moral law is the law that we impose on ourselves.

Professor of philosophy at Harvard Christine **Korsgaard 96** writes[[2]](#footnote-2)

Kant defines a free will as a rational causality that is effective without being determined by any alien cause. Anything outside of the will counts as an alien cause, including the desires and inclinations of the person. The free will must be entirely selfdetermining. Yet, because the will is a causality, it must act according to some law or other. Kant says, “Since the concept of a causality entails that of laws. . . it follows that freedom is by no means lawless . . .” Alternatively, we may say that **[S]ince the will *is* practical reason, it cannot be conceived as acting** and choosing **for no reason.** Since reasons are derived from principles, the free will must have a principle. **But because the will is free, no** law or **principle can be imposed on it from outside.** Kant concludes that **the will must** be autonomous: that is, it must **have its *own* law or principle**. And here again we arrive at the problem. For where is this law to come from? If it is imposed on the will from outside then the will is not free. **So the will must adopt the law for itself.** But until the will has a law or principle, there is nothing from which it can derive a reason. So how can it have any reason for adopting one law rather than another?

Therefore, the only force that can guide action is **practical reason** because external standards cannot obligate us.

Professor David **Velleman 06** of NYU explains[[3]](#footnote-3)

As we have seen, **requirements that depend for their force on some external source of authority turn out to be escapable because the authority behind them can be questioned. We can ask, “why should I act on this desire?” or “why should I obey the** U.S. **government?”** or even “Why should I obey God?” And as we observed in the case of the desire to punch someone in the nose, **this question demands a reason for acting.** The authority we are questioning would be vindicated, in each case, by the production of a sufficient reason. What this observation suggests is that any purported source of practical authority depends on reasons for obeying it—and hence on the authority of reasons. Suppose, then, that we attempted to question the authority of reasons themselves, as we earlier questioned other authorities. Where we previously asked “Why should I act on my desire?” **let us now ask. “Why should I act for reasons?”** shouldn’t this question open up a route of escape from all requirements? As soon as we ask why we should act for reasons, however, we can hear something odd in our question. To ask “why should I?” is to demand a reason; and so **to ask “why should I act for reasons?” is to demand a reason for acting for reasons. This demand implicitly concedes** the very authority that it purports to question—namely, **the authority of reasons.** Why would we demand a reason if we didn’t envision acting for it? If we really didn’t feel required to act for reasons, then a reason for doing so certainly wouldn’t help. So there is something self-defeating about asking for a reason to act for reasons.

Even under the conditions of naturalism we would still act on practical reason because moral consistency is the natural aspiration of human beings.

**Velleman-2** continues[[4]](#footnote-4)

Kant offered an explanation for this oddity. His explanation was that **acting for reasons is essential to being a person, something to which you unavoidably aspire.** **In order to be a person, you must have an approach to the world that is sufficiently coherent and constant to qualify as single**, continuing **point-of-view.** And part of what gives you a single, continuing point-of-view is your acceptance of particular considerations as having the force to reasons whenever they are true. We might be tempted to make this point by saying that you are a unified, persisting person and hence that you do approach practical questions from a point-of-view framed by constant reasons. But this way of making the point wouldn’t explain why you feel compelled to act for reasons; it would simply locate action for reasons in a broader context, as part of what makes you a person. One of Kant’s greatest insights, however, is that a unified, persisting person is something that you are because it is something that you aspire to be. Antecedently to this aspiration, you are merely aware that you are capable of being a person. But any creature aware that it is capable of being a person, in Kant’s view is ipso facto capable of appreciating the value of being a person and is therefore ineluctably drawn toward personhood. The value of being a person in the present context is precisely that of attaining a perspective that transcends that of your current, momentary self. **Right now, you would rather sleep than swim, but you also know that if you [do]** roll over and sleep, **you will wake up wishing that you had swum instead. Your impulse to** decide on the basis of **reason**s **is**, at bottom **an impulse to transcend these momentary points-of-view, by attaining a single, constant perspective that can subsume both of them.**

It follows from practical reason that rational beings have inherent value.

Christine **Korsgaard 96** writes[[5]](#footnote-5)

This is just a fancy new model of an argument that first appeared in a much simpler form, Kant’s argument for his Formula of Humanity. The form of relativism with which Kant began was the most elementary one we encounter - the relativity of value to human desires and interests. He started from the fact that when we make a choice we must regard its object as good. His point is the one I have been making - that being human we must endorse our impulses before we can act on them. Kant asked **what** it is that **makes** these **objects good**, and, rejecting one form of realism, he decided that the goodness wa**[i]s not in the objects themselves. Were it not for our desires** and inclinations, **we would not find** their **objects good.** Kant saw that **we take things to be important because they are important to us** - and he concluded that **we must therefore take ourselves to be important.** In this way, the value of humanity itself is implicit in every human choice. Ifnormative skepticism is to be avoided - **if there is any such thing as a reason for action** - **then humanity as the source of all reasons** andvalues **must be valued for its own sake.**

Additionally, consistency demands respect for the value of persons.

Arthur **Applbaum** of Harvard provides a second warrant for human worth[[6]](#footnote-6)

Although Kamm's is the earlier account, let us begin with Nagel's. "Morality is possible," says Nagel, "only for beings capable of seeing themselves as one individual among others more or less similar in general respects-capable, in other words, of seeing themselves as others see them." **Our lives matter to us, but we realize that the lives of billions of others matter to them. Either we concede that, from an impersonal point of view, no one really matters, or we recognize that** the fact that **each life matters** to the one who is living it does matter, in some way, **from an impersonal perspective. If one ought to matter to no one but oneself, then one cannot** continue to **think of oneself as a being that matters very much at all. Since we think of ourselves as beings that matter, consistency demands that we extend that status to others**.

Respecting human dignity requires respecting human freedom.

Professor Dwight **Furrow 05** writes[[7]](#footnote-7)

This is because **the source of human dignity is our capacity for freedom. We are distinguished from all other beings by our capacity to rationally choose our actions.** If God, nature or other persons imposed moral requirements on us, against our will, our freedom would be fatally compromised. What is more, **if our moral decisions were not free but imposed on us, we would not be morally responsible for them, thus undermining the system of praise and blame** that is **central to our moral framework. Thus,** according to Kant, **the basic condition for moral agency is** moral autonomy – **the capacity that each of us has to impose moral constraints on ourselves.**

Utilitarianism fails to meet this requirement because it prescribes a single, obligatory action in every instance, eviscerating any ability to make free moral choices. Rather, freedom requires self-ownership over one’s own body.

Professor Warren **Quinn 89** of UCLA explains[[8]](#footnote-8)

Whether we are speaking of ownership or more fundamental forms of possession, something is, morally speaking, his only if his say over what may be done to it (and thereby to him) can override the greater needs of others. **A person is constituted by his body and mind.** They are parts or aspects of him. For that very reason, **it is fitting that he have primary say over what may be done to them**-not because such an arrangement best promotes overall human welfare, but because any arrangement that denied him that say would be a grave indignity. **In giving him this authority, morality recognizes his existence as an individual with ends of his own—an independent being. Since that is what he is, he deserves this recognition. Were morality** to withhold it, were it **to allow us to kill or injure him whenever that would be** collectively **best, it would picture him not as a being in his own right but as a cell in the collective whole.** This last point can be illustrated not by thinking of bodies or minds but of lives. The moral sense in which your mind or body is yours seems to be the same as that in which your life is yours. And if your life is yours then there must be decisions concerning it that are yours to make-decisions protected by negative rights. One such matter is the choice of work or vocation. We think there is something morally amiss when people are forced to be farmers or flute players just because the balance of social needs tips in that direction. Barring great emergencies, we think people's lives must be theirs to lead. Not because that makes things go best in some independent sense but because the alternative seems to obliterate them as individuals. This obliteration, and not social inefficiency, is one of the things that strikes us as appalling in totalitarian social projects for example, in the Great Cultural Revolution. None of this, of course, denies the legitimate force of positive rights. They too are essential to the status we want as persons who matter, and they must be satisfied when it is morally possible to do so. But **negative rights**, for the reasons I have been giving, **define the terms of moral possibility. Their precedence is essential to the moral fact of our lives, minds, and bodies really being ours.**

Therefore, the **criterion** is **respecting the right to self-determination**.The affirmative advocacy is that victims may permissibly use deadly force on themselves as a response to repeated domestic violence. This is a break from status quo norms because there is currently a strong social taboo against suicide.

Kristin **Carr 02** writes[[9]](#footnote-9)

One of the most widespread ways in which **suicide is informally controlled** is simply **through avoidance. The subject is still seen as taboo, and admitting that a** family member or **friend committed suicide can often place a stigma on someone. Confessing one’s own suicidal feelings leads to even worse consequences, including involuntary commitment to a mental institution. Euphemisms such as “taking one’s life” are** often **employed** when discussing suicide, since even the word itself is disturbing to people. The majority of people do not understand suicide and see it as an irrational act, so they use different words to describe it **or [people] just avoid the subject altogether. This** keeps them from ever having to think too deeply about suicide and why it appeals to some people. It also **makes suicide even more mysterious and contributes to its reputation as something awful and unspeakable.**

To be clear, my argument is not that if you are domestically abused then you should commit suicide. My position is that suicide is a permissible option that should not be ruled out. Even for victims who don’t commit suicide, knowing that it is a permissible option helps them to cope.

Lawyer Lawrence **Stevens** writes[[10]](#footnote-10)

In On Suicide, published in 1851, Arthur Schopenhauer said: "There is nothing in the world to which every man has a more unassailable title than to his own life and person" (H. L. Mencken, A New Dictionary of Quotations, Knopf, 1942, p. 1161). In a books-on-tape audiocassette version of their book Life 101, published in 1990, John-Roger and Peter McWilliams tell us: "The consistency of descriptions from a broad range of individuals points to the possibility that death might not be so bad. ... **[The fact that] Suicide is always an option**. It **is sometimes what makes life bearable. Knowing we don't absolutely have to be here can make being here a little easier." Suzy Szasz, a victim of** Systemic **Lupus** Erythematosus, **confirms this view [saying]** in her book Living With It: Why You Don't Have To Be Healthy To Be Happy after an acute flare-up of her disease during which she contemplated suicide: "As many an ancient philosopher has noted, **I found the very freedom to commit suicide liberating**" (Prometheus Books, 1991, p. 226). In ancient times (circa 485-425 B.C.), Herodotus wrote: "When life is so burdensome death has become for man a sought after refuge." In his book The Untamed Tongue, published in 1990, psychiatrist Thomas Szasz asserts: "Suicide is a fundamental human right. ...society does not have the moral right to interfere, by force, with a person's decision to commit this act" (Open Court Publishing Co., p. 250-251).

I **contend** that suicide is consistent with the right to self-determination.

Professor Michael **Cholbi 08** gives 3 warrants[[11]](#footnote-11)

A popular **[The first] basis for the** claim that we enjoy a **right to suicide is** the claim **that we own our bodies and hence are morally permitted to dispose of them as we wish.** (In section 3.3, we observed that some religious arguments for the impermissibility of suicide depend on God's ownership of our bodies.) **On this view, our relationship to our bodies is like** that of **our relationship to other** items over which we enjoy **property** rights: Just as our having a right to a wristwatch permits us to use, improve, and dispose of it as we wish, so too does our having a right to our bodies permit us to dispose of it as we see fit. **Consequently, since property rights are exclusive** (i.e., our having property rights to a thing prohibits others from interfering with it), **others may not interfere with our efforts to end our lives.** The notion of self-ownership invoked in this argument is quite murky, since what enables us to own ordinary material items is their metaphysical distinctness from us. We can own a wristwatch only because it is distinct from us, and even under the most dualistic views of human nature, our selves are not sufficiently distinct from our bodies to make ownership of the body by the self a plausible notion. Indeed, the fact that certain ways of treating ordinary property are not available to us as ways of treating our bodies (we cannot give away or sell our bodies in any literal sense) suggests that self-ownership may be only a metaphor meant to capture a deeper moral relationship (Kluge 1975, 119). In addition, uses of one's property, including its destruction, can be harmful to others. Thus, in cases where suicide may harm others, we may be morally required to refrain from suicide. (See section 3.5 for arguments concerning duties to others)

**A**nother **[second] rationale** for a right of noninterference **is** the claim **that we have a general right to decide those matters** that are **most intimately connected to our well-being, including** the duration of our lives and the circumstances of our **[time and place of] death**s. **On this view, the right to suicide follows from a deeper right to self-determination, a right to shape** the circumstances of **our lives so long as we do not harm** or imperil **others.** As presented in the “death with dignity” movement, **[Third,] the right to suicide is** presented as **the natural corollary of the right to life.** That is, **because individuals have the right not to be killed by others, the only person with the moral right to determine** the circumstances **[time and place] of** a person's **death is that person herself** and others are therefore barred from trying to prevent a person's efforts at self-inflicted death.

Suicide is not the result of mental illness

**Stevens-2** continues[[12]](#footnote-12)

Sometimes people oppose the right to commit suicide because of belief in a sort of entirely non-biological mental illness. The error of this way of thinking is that **without a biological abnormality the only** possible **defining characteristic of mental illness is disapproval** of some aspect **of a person's** mentality or **thinking. But in a free society, it shouldn't matter if** the **thinking of a person meets with** the **disapproval** of others, provided the person's actions do not violate the rights of others.

**Further**more, **there** isn't any **[is no] good evidence that mental illness** by any generally accepted definition **is usually involved in** a person's decision to commit **suicide. In her book** about teenage suicide, Marion **Crook**, B.Sc.N., **says** "**teens considering suicide** are not necessarily mentally disturbed. In fact, they **are rarely mentally disturbed**" (Every Parent's Guide To Understanding Teenagers & Suicide, Int'l Self-Counsel Press Ltd., Vancouver, 1988, p. 10). **Psychologist Paul** G. **Quinnett, Ph.D. [notes that]**, makes this observation in his book Suicide: The Forever Decision: "As we have already discussed, however, you do not have to be mentally ill to take your own life. In fact, **most people who** do **commit suicide are not legally `insane.'**

Alternatives fail

Attempting to leave doesn't solve – it increases both the likelihood and severity of abuse.

Nancy Wright 09 of Santa Clara[[13]](#footnote-13)

Another reason that women don't leave abusive relationships is called "separation abuse,", meaning that the battered woman fears retaliation towards herself, her children, other family members, friends or even co-workers. n173 For example, in Koss, the battered wife testified that her abusive husband threatened to kill her children unless she dropped a domestic violence complaint she had filed against him. n174 Fears of retaliatory abuse appear to be well-founded since **[first,] the most** frequently and **seriously battered women are those who are separated** or divorced **from their abusers.** n175 **[Second,] although only 10% of women are separated** or divorced, **they account for 75% of all victims** of domestic violence **and are fourteen times more likely to be battered** than women who are still cohabiting. n176 Unfortunately, it is also accurate that, **[Third,] if the abuser is unable to locate the** battered **woman, he may seek revenge on other people** who are **important in her life.**

Police don’t solve.

Nancy Wright 2009 of Santa Clara[[14]](#footnote-14)

Domestic violence victims, after years of forced social isolation, may perceive no superior alternative than remaining with their abusers. n169 This result occurs when the woman's efforts to improve the relationship or extract herself from the situation prove futile, she learns she cannot escape the relationship because of her financial status or fear of retribution, and she abandons her efforts." n170 **Most battered women have sought help unsuccessfully from police** or other protective agencies. **One study of women** in Philadelphia, **who died at the hands of their abusive spouses, estimated that 64%** of the women **were known by the police to have been physically abused** before their deaths. n171 In fact, some commentators suggest that, rather than suffering from learned helplessness, [\*83] battered women are survivors whose "help seeking efforts are largely unmet" and who most need "the resources and social support that would enable them to become more independent and leave the batterer."

Nonlethal alternatives fail.

Elizabeth Ayyildiz 95 of the Chicago-Kent School of Law[[15]](#footnote-15)

To some, the death of the abuser may seem an inappropriate or excessive way for the battered woman vigilante to punish her abuser and repair the social order. Deadly force on the part of the battered woman, however, may be justified in several ways. First, death may be necessary because **lesser degrees of force may be insufficient**. The battered woman may not be able to confront the batterer without a deadly weapon **because of disparities in size, strength or emotional control.** The lower degree of force a woman typically exerts upon a man may have little or no impact on a physically stronger abuser. Indeed, **a** woman's **lesser degree of force may only incite a vicious retaliation** by the abuser. In addition to believing that a lesser degree of force will be insufficient, [And, for] many women may believe that leaving is not possible.' Those that do attempt to leave report that their abusers follow them, continuing the harassment and violence. Thus, if one accepts the premise advanced by BWS that battered women are, for a variety of reasons, unable to leave the batterer, and are often weaker than their abusers, then death may be the only means by which battered women can escape the abuse.

Next – Preempts

1. RVIs are uniquely justified for the aff because

(a) the massive time-skew of the LD 1AR makes it impractical to fully cover theory and still have a fair chance at substance; and

(b) no risk theory would exacerbate neg bias by giving him a free source of no risk offense that comes prior to all AC offense.

2. It is unfair to vote down a debater for violating a rule which was imposed ex post facto, as they had no chance to comply. Therefore, all theory and topicality violations must be checked in cross-ex so that I have a chance to agree to the negative’s interpretation.

3. Broad interpretations of the topic are good because

(a) both the philosophical and legal literature bases on this topic are very shallow, so under a narrow interpretation this topic will be stale by the ToC; and

(b) broad interpretations early in the topic are key to incentivize continued research. If the same stock arguments are going to apply every round, there’s no incentive to continue prepping on the topic.

4. Accept the aff interpretation as long as it is reasonable because the negative can adapt in the next speech, whereas I would have to start over entirely in the 1AR. This also sets the brightline for whether an interpretation is reasonable. The abusiveness of the interpretation must outweigh the structural disadvantage of forcing a 1AR restart for it to be unreasonable.

AT Sanctity of Life

Sanctity of life doesn’t prohibit suicide.

Professor Michael **Cholbi 08** gives 3 warrants[[16]](#footnote-16)

**First, [sanctity of life]** its proponents must be willing to apply the position consistently, which would also morally forbid controversial forms of killing such as capital punishment or killing in wartime. But it **would also forbid** forms of killing that seem intuitively **reasonable [killing], such as** killing in **self-defense.** To accept the sanctity of life argument seems to require endorsing a thoroughgoing pacifism.

**Secondly,** the sanctity of life view must hold that life itself, wholly independent of the happiness whose life it is, is valuable.

**Many philosophers reject** the notion that life is intrinsically valuable, **[sanctity of life]** **since it suggests, e.g., that there is value in** keeping alive an individual in **a** persistent **vegetative [person]** state **simply because she is biologically alive.** It would also suggest that a life certain to be filled with limitless suffering and anguish is valuable just by virtue of being a human life. Peter Singer (Singer 1994) and others have argued against the sanctity of life position on the grounds that the value of a continuing life is not intrinsic but extrinsic, to be judged on the basis of the individual's likely future quality of life. If the value of a person's continued life is measured by its likely quality, then suicide may be permissible when that quality is low (see section 3.5) (This is not to suggest that quality of life assessments are straightforward or uncontroversial. See Hayry 1991 for discussion).

**Finally,** it is not obvious that adequate respect for the sanctity of human life prohibits ending a life, whether by suicide or other means. Those who engage in suicidal behavior when their future promises to be extraordinarily bleak do not necessarily exhibit insufficient regard for the sanctity of life. (Dworkin 1993, 238) To end one's life before its natural end is not necessarily an insult to the value of life. Indeed, it may be argued that **suicide may be life-affirming in** those **circumstances where** medical or **psychological conditions reduce individuals to shadows of their former** fully capable **selves.** (Cholbi 2002)

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